1: Tew E-4 (no date) 1950 FT7 Yao FT7

expressed also in the speeches by the marriage sureties. The couple are exhorted to refer disputes to the sureties, and to consult the diviner in case of sickness.[1] After the rite these two sureties have special responsibilities towards the couple; grievances are referred to them, and they must be present when adultery cases are heard in court. If the marriage witness ceremony has not been performed, the relationship is not regarded as legal and no adultery compensation can be claimed by the husband.

Divorce used to be a private affair, which was merely signalized by one party giving to the other an arrow as a token of separation.[2] Nowadays all divorce cases go to court. The woman is usually asked to choose between her husband and the adulterer, and the compensation paid to the former, if she decides to leave him, is higher—amounting to about 10s. A man can be sent away from the village by his wife's kin, but if he has given no grounds for divorce he can claim compensation and will also take back any gifts made to his wife. A few small gifts to his mother-in-law are not reclaimed. Divorces are easily obtained and frequent. Grounds for the divorce of a man may include failure to pay hut tax, one of the specific duties of the husband.

The custom of making a marriage payment is recorded by Johnson[3] (on the east coast of Lake Nyasa) as a relatively new adoption. When given it is divided between the bride's father, mother, and mother's brother and brother.[4]

Slavery

Domestic slavery was an important institution in the Yao social system. Slaves were obtained by capture, purchase, or in compensation for injury.[5] A man would pay a debt by giving slaves (wives or members of his matrilineal kin group) to his creditors.[6] A man might voluntarily enslave himself to a man having charge of many women, as a means of obtaining a wife.[7] The children of a free man and a slave woman were not emancipated, as their father could not take them from the village of their mother's master, who had the right to sell them.[8] Slaves took part in the ordinary life of the village; women slaves ranked as junior wives of their masters and shared the usual work of women. Men might be supplied with guns for hunting or might accompany their masters to war, trade for them, spin, weave, sew, make baskets.[9] The institution of domestic slavery was an expression of a dominant motif in Yao culture—the association of status with a large number of dependents. Its abolition by the British was in itself a major blow to the prestige and authority of the chiefs.

Information about the social organization of the Yao in Portuguese East Africa is scanty, but it is in agreement with what is known of the Nyasaland Yao; Heckel, who knew the Yao in Lindi district, Tanganyika Territory, confirms the correctness of Stannus's account of the South Nyasa Yao.

The Yao came into Nyasaland in small parties of kinsmen. Their experience and their superior weapons soon enabled them to dominate the Nyanja among whom they settled, and today they dominate the population of the Southern Province. They are organized into loose groups of villages, under petty, independent chiefs. They seem

[1] Stannus, A. 1922, p. 243; Hynde, 1899; Johnson, J., 1922, pp. 69-73; Macdonald, 1882, vol. ii; Werner, 1908, pp. 229-32.
[2] 1922, pp. 72-3.
[3] Stannus, A. 1922, p. 280.
[4] Stannus, A. 1922, p. 280.
[5] Werner, 1908, pp. 232-3; Stannus, A. 1922, p. 237.
[6] Reigard, 1889, p. 122 (not a reliable source).
[7] Macdonald, 1882, vol. i, pp. 186-7.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Werner, 1908, p. 273.

3:Stanmus D-5 (ca. 1912) 1922 FT7 Yao FT7

That these several sections of the Wayao differ in many respects may be seen by comparing the Amangoche of *Africana*[1] with the Amachinga of this article. I am not sufficiently conversant with the Amangoche to make a definite statement on this point but I am inclined to believe that after longer residence and wider knowledge, Macdonald would have found that some of his statements needed revision. Those whom he considered the "Yao proper" but whom I prefer to speak of as the Amangoche seem to have a considerable mixture of Anyanja, since their language contains many Chinyanja words and many of their customs are practically those of the Anyanja. I am of the opinion that the Amachinga may be regarded as more typical of the Wayao, and except when ambiguity might arise, I shall speak of them as the Yao.

The original home of this Bantu speaking people is uncertain; in historic times all the sections of the Wayao were originally grouped in that part of Portuguese East Africa around the hill called Chao, whence they probably derived their name, *Wa Chao* or *Wa Yao*. About the middle of the nineteenth century, as the result of inroads by neighboring tribes of Alolo from the southeast, and raids by the Makwangala, a branch of the Angoni of Zulu origin, from the northwest, disruption of the Yao people occurred, and the divisions mentioned above, moved toward Nyasaland. The Masaninga branch settled for the most part along the eastern shore of Lake Nyasa but a sub-section known as Tambala Yao reached the west side of the lake. The Machinga made a settlement near Lake Chiuta under a number of old chiefs, including Malemya (Nalutumbo), Kawinga, Chenkula, Kalimbuka, and Masio.

The descents of the Makwangwala again caused the Wayao to move on from Chiuta to Namingo on the Mikoko stream. Here Malemya suffered another defeat at the hands of the Angoni; many of his people were driven off and taken to the neighboring Anguru country where they were held in captivity for some time. Finally they were restored by the enterprise of one of Malemya's old men, Kulungala, who went alone to the Angoni, saying that he wished to live with them and with his own brethren. One day, he asked the Angoni if they would like to see their captives dance, and when they assented, he called the Yao together, and clapping his hands to keep time, he began to sing one of their dance songs. Gradually he gathered all the Yao into the village open space, dancing and singing; then, keeping to the same air, he told them why he had come, using their own language which the Angoni did not understand. "Malemya, our chief, remains at the Mikoko stream. It is not far off. We must all join him again. Now dance for joy. If anyone does not return there, it is his own fault." Then, a few at a time, the dancers left the crowd and stole away into the bush and, as night came on, they all made off and reached Malemya's camp in safety.

Malemya's people were again attacked by the Angoni, and on this occasion they defeated their enemies. The Angoni retreated and skirting Zomba mountain, reached the Shiré

[1] Macdonald, *op. cit.*

7: Hetherwick M-5 (ca. 1900) 1902 FT7 Yao FT7

Unkulunkulu, which may therefore be rendered as "The old, old One," or "The great, great One." A like rendering may be given of the Yao form *mulungu*, the "Old One," or the "Great One." In this or a modified form *mwungu* (Swahili) it appears in all the Eastern group of the Bantu tongues as the equivalent for "God" (see Father Torrend's *Comparative Grammar of South African Bantu Languages*). To trace it as Father Torrend does to any connection with Moloch, the god of the Phœnicians, is to attach undue weight to a chance coincidence of sounds.

As we have already seen, the word *mulungu* is applied to the human *kivuli* when regarded as an object of worship, or as an inhabitant of the spirit world. But it is also used to denote that spirit world in general, or more properly speaking, the *aggregate of the spirits of all the dead*. The plural form of the word is rarely heard, unless when the allusion is made to the souls in their individualities. In its native use and form the word does not imply personality, for it does not belong to the personal class of nouns. Etymologically it is classed with the leg, heart, arm, head, etc., of the human frame. Its form denotes rather a state or property inhering in something, as the life or health inheres in the body. Among the various tribes where the word is in use as we have described, the missionaries have adopted it as the term for "God." But the untaught Yao refuses to assign to it any idea of being or personality. It is to him more a quality or faculty of the human nature whose signification he has extended so as to embrace the whole spirit world. Once after I had endeavoured to impress an old Yao headman with the personality of the Godhead in the Christian sense of the term, using the term *Mulungu*, my listener began to talk of "Che Mulungu," "Mr. God," showing that originally to him the word conveyed no idea of the personality I was ascribing to it.

And yet the Yao approaches closely to the idea of personality and a personal being, when he speaks of what *mulungu* has done and is doing. It is *mulungu* who made the world, and man, and animals. Far in the interior of the continent, toward the north-west, beyond the plains and swamps of the Loangwa River and Lake Bangweolo, there lies, in Yao legend, an island in the midst of a lake called Kapiritimya. On that island there is to be seen a large flat rock marked by the footprints of men and animals of all kinds. When that rock was once a heap of moist clay, *mulungu* created all living things and sent them across the soft mass, where their footprints remained to be afterwards hardened into the imperishable rock. Such is the Yao legend of the creation of the world, and *mulungu* is always the Great Creator.

Mulungu is also regarded as the agent in anything mysterious. "It's *mulungu*," is the Yao exclamation on being shown anything that is beyond the range of his understanding. The rainbow is always "*mulungu*," although some Yaos have begun to use the Mang'anja term "uta wa Leza," bow of Leza.

Offerings are made to the spirit world or to *mulungu* as the great agency in the affairs of human life. Outside the village, or beside the headman's hut, may often be seen a rough shed. In this are placed the first-fruits of the new crop,